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SUBJECT: PAKISTAN MEDIA REACTION: TOP STORIES, U.S. CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION, TERRORISM/MILITARY, MISCELLANEOUS, POLITICAL - NOVEMBER 13, 2009

Summary: Most mainstream newspapers published the U.S. Embassy's statement condemning the assassination of an Iranian Consulate Press staffer in Peshawar. Newspapers also reported that the U.S. donated emergency medical supplies to NWFP hospitals to treat trauma victims. Reports that five U.S. Congressmen, led by John Tierney (D-MA), visited Jalozai refugees camp were also highlighted. Prime Minister Gilani's remarks that interactions between Pak-U.S. lawmakers will help to remove misperceptions in the bilateral relations received prominent display. Several major newspapers highlighted reports that U.S. National Security Advisor Jones will meet top political and military leaders on Friday (today). Commenting on the security of Pakistan nuclear weapons, "Daily Times" said that the National Command Authority (NCA) Bill will allay Western apprehensions regarding this issue. "The Nation" unleashes front page editorial against U.S. reporters. End Summary.

TOP STORIES

News Story: U.S. Condemns Killing: Iranian Consulate Official Shot Dead In Peshawar "Daily Times" (11/13)

"Unidentified gunmen killed a Pakistani Abul Hassan Jaffery - Director of Public Relations working for the Iranian consulate in Peshawar on Thursday, said police. Cantonment Superintendent Police Nisar Marwat told reporters the 'Iranian official could have been the victim of a sectarian killing.'... Separately, the U.S. Embassy said that Jaffery's killing was part of extremists' strategy to 'isolate Pakistan' and deprive the country of the international community's support." (Story also front paged in all newspapers)

U.S. CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION

News Story: U.S. Donates \$430,000 In Medical Supplies To NWFP "Daily Times" (11/13)

"The U.S. government donated emergency medical supplies worth \$430,000 to NWFP hospitals to equip them to treat trauma victims. The urgently needed medical equipment will replenish and expand medical stocks at large hospitals in areas particularly prone to mass casualty incidents."

News Story: U.S. Senators Praise Malakand IDPs' Role "The Nation" (11/13)

"Five Senators of U.S. Congress, led by Senator John Tierney visited

Jalozai refugees camp and appreciated the role of Internally Displaced Persons in the ongoing war against militancy. Addressing the Jirga of Mohmand and Bajaur IDPs in Jalozai refugees camps they said that the U.S. would not undermine the sacrifices given by Pakistan Army and its people."

News Story: Interaction Between Pak-U.S. Lawmakers To Help Remove Misperceptions: Prime Minister "Business Recorder," "The News" (11/13)

"Prime Minister Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani, while welcoming the growing interaction between the parliamentarians of Pakistan and the United States, has said that greater people-to-people contact will help in removing the misperceptions and misgivings in the bilateral relations between the two countries. The Prime Minister was talking to a U.S. Congressional delegation, headed by Representative David Price, who called on him at the PM's House in Islamabad on Thursday." (Story also front paged in all newspapers)

News Story: PM Presses U.S. For Swift Refund Of CSF Expenses "Daily Times" (11/13)

Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani on Thursday regretted the delay in the reimbursement of the Coalition Support Fund at a time when the country was fighting terrorism. The premier urged the U.S. to fulfill its commitment towards the capacity building of law enforcement agencies, he said while talking to a U.S. Congressional delegation that called on him at Prime Minister's House. David Price led the six-member delegation."

News Story: Pak, U.S. Ties To Be Strategic, Multifaceted: Naek "The Frontier Post" (11/13)

"Chairman Senate Farooq H. Naek has said that Pakistan wanted to build a long-term partnership and a relationship of trust with the U.S. based on mutual respect and shared goals looking beyond narrow paradigms of security and the war on terror. He was talking to a U.S. Congressional Delegation headed by Mr. David Price, Chairman of the House Democracy Partnership Commission, which called on him at the Parliament House and discussed a host of issues pertaining to Pak-U.S. relations."

Editorial: Demand That Foreign Aid Be Given Through Official Agencies, an editorial in the center-right Urdu daily "Pakistan" (cir. 10,000) (11/13)

"We strongly support Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani's demand that American assistance should be disbursed through government institutions. However, we cannot deny the horrible corruption in the administration.... Corruption is not just an issue for Americans; it is the problem of entire Pakistan. We suggest that government should hold an all parties conference to find ways and means to tackle the problem."

Editorial: Managing Kerry-Lugar Aid, an editorial in the Lahore-based liberal English language daily "Daily Times" (cir. 10,000) (11/13)

"Talking to a U.S. Congressional delegation on Wednesday, Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani urged the U.S. 'to channel its economic assistance through a transparent mechanism established by the Government of Pakistan.'... The transparency and efficiency of the supposed local partners (Pakistani NGOs) has rarely been commendable. The cumulative upshot of this rather murky picture is that all stakeholders in this panorama have skeletons in their cupboards that need to be exorcised so that the intended beneficiaries of this socio-economic aid package, the people of Pakistan, can themselves bear witness to the true spirit and intent of this aid package."

TERRORISM/MILITARY ISSUES

News Story: U.S. Adviser To Meet Political, Military Leaders "The Post" (11/13)

"U.S. National Security Adviser James Jones will meet top political

and military leadership on Friday (today). Jones will meet high-ups of the political and military leadership to discuss with them host of bilateral issues like strategic relations, war against terrorism, and other matters in length."

News Story: 17 Troops, 22 Militants Die In Fierce SWA Fighting "The News" (11/13)

"Stiff Taliban resistance killed 17 soldiers on Thursday in the military's deadliest day since the launching of a major offensive in the South Waziristan Agency (SWA), security officials said. At least 15 soldiers were killed in clashes, while a roadside bomb killed two soldiers in the Srarogha area further east, officials said. The Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) earlier said that five soldiers and 22 militants were killed in the last 24 hours of the offensive." (Story also front paged in all newspapers)

News Story: 40 Suspects Held In Bajaur; Hideouts Destroyed "The News" (11/13)

"The political administration and security forces in a joint operation apprehended 40 suspected persons in Khar tehsil of Bajaur Agency on Thursday. Several hideouts of the militants were also destroyed when forces shelled various areas in the agency."

Editorial: National Command Authority Bill, an editorial in the Lahore-based liberal English language daily "Daily Times" (cir. 10,000) (11/13)

"A report of the Standing Committee on defence regarding the National Command Authority (NCA) bill 2007 has been laid before the National Assembly. The timing of the report's presentation suggests to some observers the urgency of allaying the fears expressed by the Western media ... in the context of the track record of the security

of Pakistan's nuclear weapons.... Until that desirable but difficult to achieve goal is at hand, the NCA bill serves to ensure the safety and security of Pakistan's arsenal and hopefully allay Western apprehensions regarding this issue."

Opinion: Life Threat: A New Weapon To Silence U.S. Critics, an op-ed by Ahmed Quraishi in the center-right national English daily "The Nation" (cir. 20,000) (11/13)

"A rumpus is brewing in a small corner of the Pakistani media over the safety of a New Delhi-based American journalist. Being a U.S. citizen has its benefits and Mr. Mathew Rosenberg is lucky to have a few coming to his defence in Pakistan. A couple of months ago a Pakistani journalist's life came under threat in Swat. He escaped to Washington where he was humiliated on landing, kept in detention for two weeks and is entangled now in a legal mess. Mr. Rosenberg's self-appointed defenders in the Pakistani media silently watched that story without uttering a word, let alone writing editorials."

Editorial: Targeting Pak-Iran Ties, an editorial in the center-right national English daily "The Nation" (cir. 20,000) (11/13)

"There is clearly an agenda by some external forces to destroy our relations with Iran.... The latest incident happened in the terror-torn city of Peshawar on Thursday when the Director Public Relations of the Iranian Consulate, Pakistani national Syed Jaffri, was gunned down on his way to office. The incident reflects efforts by external forces to aggravate the Pakistan-Iran equation.... Yet for some inexplicable reason we are hostage to our external players' agendas.... One has to wonder why our leadership is allowing vested interests to hold Pakistan-Iran relations hostage."

Editorial: Sectarian Target?, an editorial in the populist, often sensational national English daily "The News" (cir. 55,000) (11/13)

"A Pakistani official employed at the Iranian consulate in Peshawar has been killed. He becomes the latest victim of carefully planned terrorism, executed by gunmen who lay await for him outside his home. We have seen almost identical murders in recent weeks in Islamabad. Terrorism in the Pakistan of today comes in many forms: bombs and bullets are both a part of it. It must be assumed the director of public relations at the consulate was attacked on the

basis of his sect."

Editorial: What Will Be The Post-Rahe Nijaat Roadmap?, an editorial in the leading mass circulation populist, often sensational Urdu daily "Jang" (cir. 300,000) (11/13)

"There are indications that the Operation 'Rah-e-Nijaat' is going ahead successfully and hopefully its targets would be achieved in near future. But the question arises here what would be the roadmap after the conclusion of this military operation? There are also indications that Washington and the Taliban are heading towards mutual dialogue. Have we prepared ourselves to cope with the situation that will be created due to the possible withdrawal of the American forces from Afghanistan and the retreat of militants in Waziristan? It will be a folly to think that all of the terrorists would be killed, or arrested during the military operation. Actually, their remnants would leave no stone unturned to create unrest by instigating the families who have lost their near and dear ones in the terrorist attacks."

Editorial: Dealing With An Organized Onslaught Of Terrorism, an editorial in the country's premier business newspaper, "Business Recorder" (cir. 25,000) (11/13)

"The car bomb attack in Charsadda, killing 34 innocent people and injuring nearly 100 others... Fearful of confronting the military openly in South Waziristan, the terrorists have chosen to attack unarmed and unwary citizens, which is a dastardly act.... The present month is likely to see increased activity on the part of the Taliban, which is indicative of the panic caused by the loss of their stronghold in South Waziristan. They seem to be diverting much of their human and physical assets to attacks inside the cities in a bid to weaken the will of the government and the people who are fully supporting the operation in Waziristan. The attacks are thus a part of the psychological warfare the TTP is conducting. What is needed is that the resolve to wipe out the menace of terrorism, for

all times to come, must not wilt."

Editorial: Lawlessness of NATO Trucks, an editorial note in the second-largest, nationalist Urdu daily "Nawa-i-Waqt" (cir. 150,000) (11/13)

"NATO supply trucks have reportedly damaged the National Highway. According to a press report, the NATO supply trucks usually carry more than permissible load and they are not checked during the journey.... Million of rupees will be required to repair the damaged Indus Highway.... NATO trucks take the route of Karachi, Hyderabad, Shikarpur, Kashmore, DG Khan, DI Khan and Peshawar to reach Afghanistan. For being exempted from checking the truck are often found involved in illegal activities.... Intelligence agencies reports about Indian weapons and terrorism material smuggling into Pakistan through these trucks have already surfaced.... Either the NATO supplies via Pakistan should be stopped or the supply should be subjected to rigorous inspection. Moreover, NATO should be asked to pay damages for breaking the National Highway."

Opinion: Did Clinton's Visit Make A Difference?, an op-ed by Najmuddin A. Shaikh in the Lahore-based liberal English language daily "Daily Times" (cir. 10,000) (11/13)

"There has perhaps in the weeks that have passed been a visible toning down of the anti-American rhetoric in the TV and press commentaries and to that extent one can perhaps say that the visit was successful. But did we ask the hard questions and did we do the soul searching that Clinton's questions should have prompted? Did we for instance raise the question of seeking American assistance in removing the refugee camps from the Afghan border with Balochistan? After all if the Quetta Shura is an issue, the first step should be to remove the camps into which the Taliban can move with minimal difficulty. Did we ask why the U.S. cannot persuade the Afghans to accept the biometric identification system for legal border crossings at Chaman and Torkham? If borders are to be secured, surely you must start with the fact that border crossings have to be controlled."

Opinion: Hillary Was Undeterred, an op-ed by Salahuddin Haider in the Islamabad-based rightist English daily "Pakistan Observer" (cir. 5,000) (11/13)

"Hillary was not only undeterred in her mission to turn a new leaf in relations with Pakistan but looks determined to do that whatever the obstacles. She was the first American government functionary to discard the procedural ways of talking only to those in authority, and set a new style of establishing direct contacts with the people. This was never done before in the 62 years of Pak-U.S. relationship. The lady proved beyond any shadow of doubt that she had vision and believed in what she thought was right."

Opinion: The Taliban And Al Qaeda, an op-ed by Dr. Masooda Bano in the populist, often sensational national English daily "The News" (cir. 55,000) (11/13)

"The U.S. thinks Pakistan is not doing enough to capture Al-Qaeda's leadership. One of the main positions advanced by Hillary Clinton on her trip to Pakistan was that the Pakistani military has to target not just those who are attacking targets within Pakistan but also those who are launching attacks in Afghanistan.... However, where Ms. Clinton's concerns merited a more serious consideration was her honest admission that it is difficult to believe that no one in the Pakistani government knows about Al-Qaeda members and that the government cannot actually catch them if it really wanted. This is indeed a legitimate concern."

MISCELLANEOUS

News Story: Khalilzad In Islamabad For Damage Control "The News" (11/13)

"President Asif Ali Zardari received a surprise guest on Wednesday night when his old friend from his New York days, Zalmay Khalilzad, had dinner with him to discuss what someone privy to his mission described as 'restoring the confidence of his beleaguered friend in a bunker.'... As Khalilzad travelled all the way from Washington,

the U.S. Embassy and the Foreign Office showed complete ignorance about his presence in Pakistan. Khalilzad landed in Islamabad on Tuesday night, one day ahead of U.S. National Security Adviser Jones's arrival."

News Story: Afghanistan Must Not Be Terrorist Haven: NATO Chief "The News" (11/13)

"Western allies need to bolster military training for Afghanistan so it does not become a safe haven for terrorists and can assure its own security, the head of NATO said on Thursday. NATO Secretary-General Anders Fogh Rasmussen said he shared the concern of the U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan about sending more troops to the country but stressed that the allies must stay the course and commit more to training Afghan forces."

Editorial: Perhaps Wisdom Is Dawning On Obama, an editorial in the Islamabad-based rightist English daily "Pakistan Observer" (cir. 5,000) (11/13)

"Though the U.S. President has not given any timeframe for vacation of aggression yet the very fact that he is talking about not staying for indefinite period is reflective of change of thinking in Washington.... Though the American President is surrounded by warmongers yet we believe that he will have to make a quick decision about the withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan where the invaders are unlikely to be victors even if the war continues for decades more. It will, therefore, be in the interest of the United States itself to make preparations for withdrawal of troops at the earliest possible."

Editorial: An Exit Option For U.S., an editorial in the center-right national English daily "The Nation" (cir. 20,000) (11/13)

"Whatever the causes of failure of the U.S.-led forces, and there are more than one, the Obama administration should seriously consider the offer of talks made by Mullah Wakil Mutawakkal, former Taliban's Foreign Minister, contingent upon the foreign forces

leaving Afghanistan.... Obama rightly says that the U.S. would not stay put in Afghanistan because he realizes that in this post-imperialist age, no country can remain in occupation of another against the wishes of the local people. With Mutawakkal telling the Americans that the Taliban, unlike Al-Qaeda, do not have a global agenda, they would be flexible and do not constitute a threat to the world, the U.S. President should grab the opportunity to negotiate an honorable exit."

Editorial: Afghanistan: Obama's claim and Mullah Mutawakkil's offer, an editorial in the second-largest, nationalist Urdu daily "Nawa-i-Waqt" (cir. 150,000) (11/13)

"In an interview to a news channel President Barack Obama has said that America does not intend to stay in Afghanistan indefinitely.... Meanwhile, the White House spokesperson has said that before sending troops to Afghanistan President Obama is reviewing the situation in Pakistan.... According to press reports, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's Pakistan visit was aimed at finding avenues to start talks with the Taliban and get Pakistan and Saudi Arabia's cooperation in this respect.... America should accept dialogue offer by Gulbadeen Hikmatyar and Mullah Abdul Wakeel and should accept the condition of the troops' withdrawal.... Hikmatyar is willing to give safe and respectable passage to America.... Obama should not let this golden opportunity go waste."

Editorial: Measures Against Terrorism And Issues That Need Attention, in the liberal Urdu daily "Express" (cir.25, 000) (11/13)

"Worth noting is Afghan foreign minister of the Taliban era Wakeel Ahmad Mutawakkil's statement that one faction of the Taliban is willing to talk to the U.S. but for that to happen, the U.S. must get ready to leave Afghanistan. Experts of Pakistan and Afghanistan affairs say that the law and order situation in Pakistan would improve a great deal if the allied forces succeed in controlling the situation in Afghanistan. Hence the U.S. needs to give due consideration to this issue."

Editorial: Withdrawal of Foreign Forces From Afghanistan, an

editorial in the Peshawar-based Urdu-language daily "Mashriq" (cir. 55,000) (11/13)

"It seems that the United States is preparing to withdraw its forces from Afghanistan and for this purpose Washington has approached different powers to facilitate negotiations with the Taliban. The present Afghan situation clearly demonstrates that it would be impossible for the U.S. to eliminate Taliban even by sending more troops to Afghanistan. Under these circumstances, we appreciate timely advice from Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani to the Obama administration that the latter should take Pakistan on board regarding its new Afghan policy."

Editorial: Is a Change in Afghanistan's Situation in the Offing?, an editorial in the Karachi-based, pro-Taliban Jihadi Urdu daily "Islam" (cir. 15,000) (11/13)

"The reports emerging out of Afghanistan show that Washington will not be in a position to maintain its military presence in that country. The Obama administration has also expressed its willingness to negotiate with the Taliban. Moreover, it has been dawned upon the U.S. government that its Afghan-Pakistan policy is not practicable. Any possible change in the Afghanistan will also affect the situation in our country. We think that it is the need of the hour that Pakistan improve its relations with old friends to anticipate the future scenario."

POLITICAL ISSUES

News Story: Stop Military Operation In Balochistan, Nawaz Asks Govt. "Daily Times" (11/13)

"Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) chief Nawaz Sharif on Thursday called on the government to immediately stop military operations in Balochistan, if any were being conducted in the province. Nawaz's demand came at a meeting with Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani.

'Cases against Baloch leaders should be withdrawn [as well], and the killers of Baloch leaders - particularly of Nawab Akbar Bugti - must be brought to justice,' Nawaz told a press conference after the meeting."

(All circulation figures are based on estimation)
Patterson